



Small Area Plan

Area 2 – Willey | Snider | Richwood

Recommendations Report

February 8, 2018

MAP NUMBER	CURRENT ZONING	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	OBSERVATIONS
2	R-1A, R-2, B-1, B-2	North Willey Street, Snyder Street, and Richwood Avenue; adjoins the Woodburn Neighborhood.	<p><i>Current mix of residential and commercial zoning does not reflect existing uses or future potential.</i></p> <p>Considerations for future study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitting higher density residential patterns • Permitting mixed uses • Incentives to assemble and consolidate parcels for redevelopment • Design standards that are appropriate to the location and scale of the corridor • Transition to lower density residential adjoining the Woodburn Neighborhood. • Infrastructure improvements supporting higher densities including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, street lighting.





Background

What is an Area for Future Study?

During the course of preparing the *2013 Comprehensive Plan Update (2013 Comp Plan)*, sixteen (16) areas were identified that could benefit from further exploration and study. Each of these areas has its own unique character that should be protected and enhanced as new development or redevelopment takes place. These areas were identified in Appendix A of the *2013 Comp Plan* as “Areas for Future Study”.

The “Areas for Future Study” are places where the existing zoning does not align with the existing land uses or the existing pattern of development. It may also be an area where the existing zoning is not compatible with, or does not fully support the desired future of the area as indicated in the *2013 Comp Plan’s* Land Management Map. These areas require further land use and development study by the Planning Commission to support zoning map amendment and/or zoning text amendment recommendations to City Council that will advance the goals, objectives, strategies, and consistency principles of the *2013 Comp Plan*.

What is a Small Area Plan?

A Small Area Plan is a neighborhood-level plan that addresses land use, transportation, and a variety of other development-related topics. For each Area for Future Study, a plan is developed that is reviewed and recommended by the Planning Commission and then adopted by City Council. Ultimately, a goal of the Small Area Plan is to enhance the quality of life in each distinct Future Study Area.

Relationship to the City of Morgantown Comprehensive Plan Update

Small Area Plans assist in implementing the goals and recommendations of the *2013 Comp Plan* within the sixteen (16) identified Future Study Areas. Recognizing the unique character of these different neighborhoods and/or commercial nodes, Small Area Plans provide a separate, more detailed land use planning initiative guided by the *2013 Comp Plan’s* vision, objectives, and strategies and the Land Management Map.

Benefits of Small Area Plans

A key benefit of the small area planning process is local stakeholder involvement in the development of each plan’s analysis and recommendations. Small Area Plans serve as a guide for land use, development patterns, environmental protection, transportation improvements, open space and other capital improvements, and identify opportunities for revitalization and, where appropriate, mixed-use development.

Benefits of Small Area Plans:

- Represent the community’s vision
- Reflect property owner and resident stakeholders’ input



- Provide specific recommendations at a neighborhood level
- Offer increased efficiency in the provision of public services
- Remove potential regulatory obstacles and catalyze revitalization opportunities
- Allow greater predictability in land use and development
- Enable neighborhoods to be proactive in making land use recommendations
- Identify priority neighborhood projects and possible resources for implementation
- Help to guide the investment decisions of local governments

Introduction

The Area 2 planning area is large, encompassing 310 parcels spanning nearly 52 acres (inclusive of rights-of-way). The area sits immediately northeast of the Morgantown Central Business District (CBD) just north of Decker's Creek. The study area identified in the 2013 *Comp Plan* forms its border with sections of Willey Street, Oak Street, Union Avenue, Marion Street, and Richwood Avenue. **Figure 1** displays a modified planning area boundary in green, which reflects input from the first public forum. Specifically, participants felt including additional territory toward the west along Wells Street, Fife Avenue and Price Street better matched the boundary for the adjacent Future Study Area 3 and included WVU's Arnold Hall, the recent closure of which could have potential impacts on the immediate area.

Current Zoning Classifications

The following **Table 1** identifies the seven (7) zoning districts currently within the study area along with the related land coverages in acres and percentage. **Figure 2** shows the zoning districts located within and adjacent to the study area.

Table 1: Land Use Types

Current Zoning Classifications	Land Coverage in Acres	Land Coverage In Percentage
R-1A, Single-Family Residential District	7.69 acres	14.8%
R-2, Single- and Two-Family Residential District	18.46 acres	35.7%
R-3, Multi-Family Residential District	2.48 acres	4.8%
Total Residential	28.63 acres	55.3%
O-I, Office and Institutional District	0.10 acres	0.2%
B-1, Neighborhood Business District	3.95 acres	7.6%
B-2, Service Business District	4.70 acres	9.1%
B-4, General Business District	1.84 acres	3.6%
Total Nonresidential	12.55 acres	24.2%



The R-2 District occupies the most space within the study area, covering 35.7% or 18.46 acres, which is more area than the nonresidential or business districts combined. With the exception of the one (1) OI District parcel, all of the business districts are located along higher-capacity arterial and collector roads of Willey Street and Richwood Avenue. **Appendix A** contains photographs of the study area.

Current Land Uses

According to the *2013 Comprehensive Plan*, the area exhibits a “current mix of residential and commercial zoning which does not reflect existing uses or future potential.” The *2013 Comp Plan* recommends a number of actions be considered for future study:

- Permit higher density residential patterns
- Permit mixed uses
- Incentives to assemble and consolidate parcels for redevelopment
- Design standards that are appropriate to the location and scale of the corridor
- Transition to lower density residential adjoining the Woodburn Neighborhood
- Infrastructure improvements supporting higher densities including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and street lighting

In 2012, to support preparation of the *2013 Comp Plan*, a windshield land use survey was conducted for the entire City to establish land use classifications. Because no significant change appears to have occurred within the Area 2 study area, this data was used for identifying trends. There appears to be approximately 210 fully-enclosed and two (2) partially-enclosed structures within the study area boundary. The study team identified 203 residential plots including all parcels with single-, two-, and multi-family buildings. However, at least five (5) of the parcels appeared to be vacant after viewing 2015 aerial imagery. These tracts contain 195 structures that include homes as well as several detached accessory structures (e.g., garages, sheds, etc.). **Figure 3** illustrates affected structures in the study area.

All existing land use designations are identified in **Table 2**. The table shows the most recent general land use classification data (2012), the number of parcels in that classification, and the total land area in acres for each land use type.

Table 2: Land Use Types

Current Land Use	No. of Parcels	Area (Acres)
Retail	3	1.14
Parking	16	2.43
Residential – Single Family	76	8.22
Residential – Two Family	70	6.68
Residential – Multi-Family	78	8.94
Public / Semi-Public	6	2.17
Vacant / Open Space	49	6.50
Vacant / Underutilized	3	1.58
WVU	9	1.55
Right-of-way	N/A	12.55



Current Land Uses

Figures 4 and 5 show 2010 US Census population and housing data for Census blocks that fall within the study area. Most of the blocks fall within the area; however, a few blocks exceed the boundary of the study area. It appears 957 people were identified as living within the fully encompassed census blocks. For the blocks that partially lie outside the boundary, 22 single- to multi-family buildings exist. Therefore, it is estimated that at least 1,000 people reside within the study area.

Tenancy

Figure 6 and **Figure 7** illustrate residential rental and non-rental properties. In **Figure 6**, the sheer number of rental properties illustrates the overwhelming trend towards student rental housing in this neighborhood and the significance of having this area adjacent to the WVU downtown campus. The number of student residential rentals supports the need for this area to be walkable and the desire for more density, less auto-dependent, and properly planned off-street vehicle storage.

Figure 7 highlights the remaining single-family properties that exist between Battelle and Clinton as the neighborhood shifts to predominantly single-family ownership in the adjoining Woodburn neighborhood. The other feature highlighted by the non-rental data is the potential for redevelopment within the Richwood Avenue loop, which at this time is mainly surface parking. Opportunities exist, with proper geotechnical, structural, and infrastructure improvement engineering, to develop higher-density, mixed-use properties in close proximity to the downtown and main WVU campus areas.

Slopes

A major component of the planning process and site evaluation for this study area is topography and how elevation changes may affect the ability to fully build to a density that reflects desired residential and mixed-use development patterns. **Figure 8** illustrates steep grades along the hillside from Battelle Avenue and Union Avenue up to the peak at Monongalia Avenue. A significant increase in building heights, to accommodate higher-scaled buildings and densities, would, without special considerations, introduce viewshed impediments for those landowners at the top of the hill. These physical impediments should be of utmost importance in assessing the future conditions possible in this area.

Transportation

The transportation system serving the study area is made up of both local and highly travelled streets, along with transit stops connecting riders to the greater Morgantown region. Willey Street and Richwood Avenue are designated as a minor arterial and a major collector, respectively, by West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOT) standards. Willey Street is a part of the State's Highway System, which falls under the planning, regulatory, and maintenance



responsibilities of WVDOH. Richwood Avenue is a part of the City's road system and is accordingly the responsibility of the City of Morgantown. Both roadways serve as important access corridors to downtown Morgantown and host large volumes of through traffic. Traffic volume and speed on Willey Street and Richwood Avenue are perceived areas of concern, not only for system integrity, but for quality of life, connectivity within the neighborhood, and pedestrian and bicycle access and utilization.

Other streets within the study area are local in nature and have inherent issues related to narrow curb-to-curb widths, including design capacity, emergency and trash pickup access, and safety conditions. On-street parking congestion, resulting from significant single-family conversions to two- and multi-family occupancy, has also contributed to roadway capacity challenges. Local streets within the study area were not designed, constructed, or intended to serve the residential density growth that has occurred over the last several decades.

Pedestrian access and connectivity within the study area is less than desirable. While several study area streets contain parallel public sidewalks, many pedestrian facilities appear to be disjointed in areas and deteriorating into fair to poor condition. The unopened/unimproved right-of-way of East Prospect Street serves as an essential pedestrian way between Richwood Avenue and Willey Street connecting the study area and adjoining Woodburn neighborhood with the downtown.

Mountain Line Transit Authority currently runs the following routes through the study area.



This hourly route travels Southbound through South Park, Morgantown High School, White Park, Mountaineer Mall, Senior Monongalians back to downtown. This route operates Monday through Saturday from 7:00 am to 7:10 pm year round.



This hourly service alternates route each hour. This bus departs the depot and travels to Unity Manor and the Lair. On the even hour it departs the Lair and travels on to Towers, Oakland Ave, Ruby Memorial Hospital, North Hills, Mon General Hospital returning to Ruby then E. Moore Hall and back to the depot. On the odd hour it departs the Lair and travels to Towers, Mountaineer Station/PRT, Indep. Hills MHP, The Villages at West Run, Riddle and returns via Mountaineer Station, Towers, E. Moore Hall to the depot. This route operates Monday through Saturday, 6:00 am to 7:10 pm.



Small Area Plan Future Study Area 2

Red Line

This route departs the Depot, travels by Boreman Hall and the Lair, through Sunnyside by way of University. The Red Line then continues into Suncrest by way of University Avenue, traveling Junior Avenue to Riverside Commons and connects to Fairfield Street then traveling into Star City. This route also covers Western Avenue, Collins Ferry Road and returns to Towers and Lair for its return to the Depot. This service operates Monday through Saturday beginning at 6:20 am running every 70 minutes until 6:30 pm.

Tyrone

This service operates Monday through Saturday and connects the Depot to Brookhaven and Cheat Lake. This route travels by Unity Manor, Richwood Avenue, Sabraton, Sabraton DMV, Brookhaven, Rock Forge, Dellslow, Culp's MHP, Tyrone, Trinity, Glenmark Center, and Cheat Lake Resort. This route runs Monday through Friday 6:30 am to 7:30 pm and Saturday from 8:00 am until 7:30 pm. On Saturday there are 4 full trips out to Cheat Lake with 8 partial trips through Sabraton to Brookhaven Road. This route services the Mon-Fayette Cheat Lake Park & Ride.

Blue Line

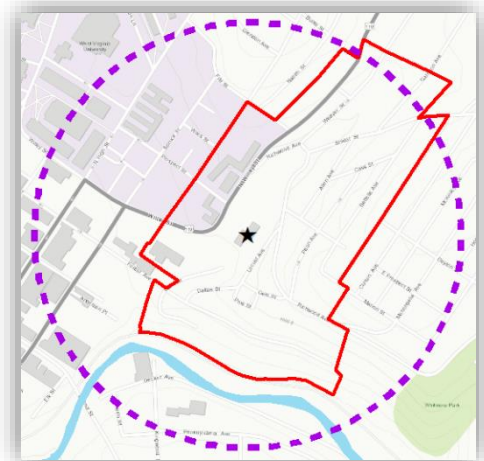
This route serves Unity Manor, Richwood & Charles, Airport & Mileground (by Request), Easton Hill, University High School, Canyon Dairy Mart, Lakeside Canyon, Crest Point and the Depot. This route operates hourly from 6:30 am to 5:10 pm Monday through Friday and Saturday from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm.

Pink Line

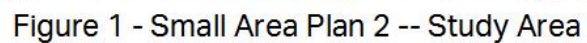
The Pink Line departs the Downtown Morgantown Depot, travels up Spruce Street, Willey Street, across the Mileground, down Easton Hill and arrives at its end point at Pierpont Centre. The Pink Line immediately reverses its route and returns to the Depot via the same route. This service runs Monday through Saturday from 7:20 am until 5:10 pm.

To better understand public transit ridership trends within and near the study area, the Unity Manor development at 400 Willey Street was used to establish the center of a quarter-mile transit access radius, which is illustrated in **Graphic 1**.

According to Mountain Line Transit Authority administration, the month of October 2017 (no holiday month) saw 4,404 boardings, 116 of which were disabled persons, and 2,773 disembarkments within the quarter-mile transit access radius.



Graphic 1: Transit Radius





Small Area Plan Future Study Area 2

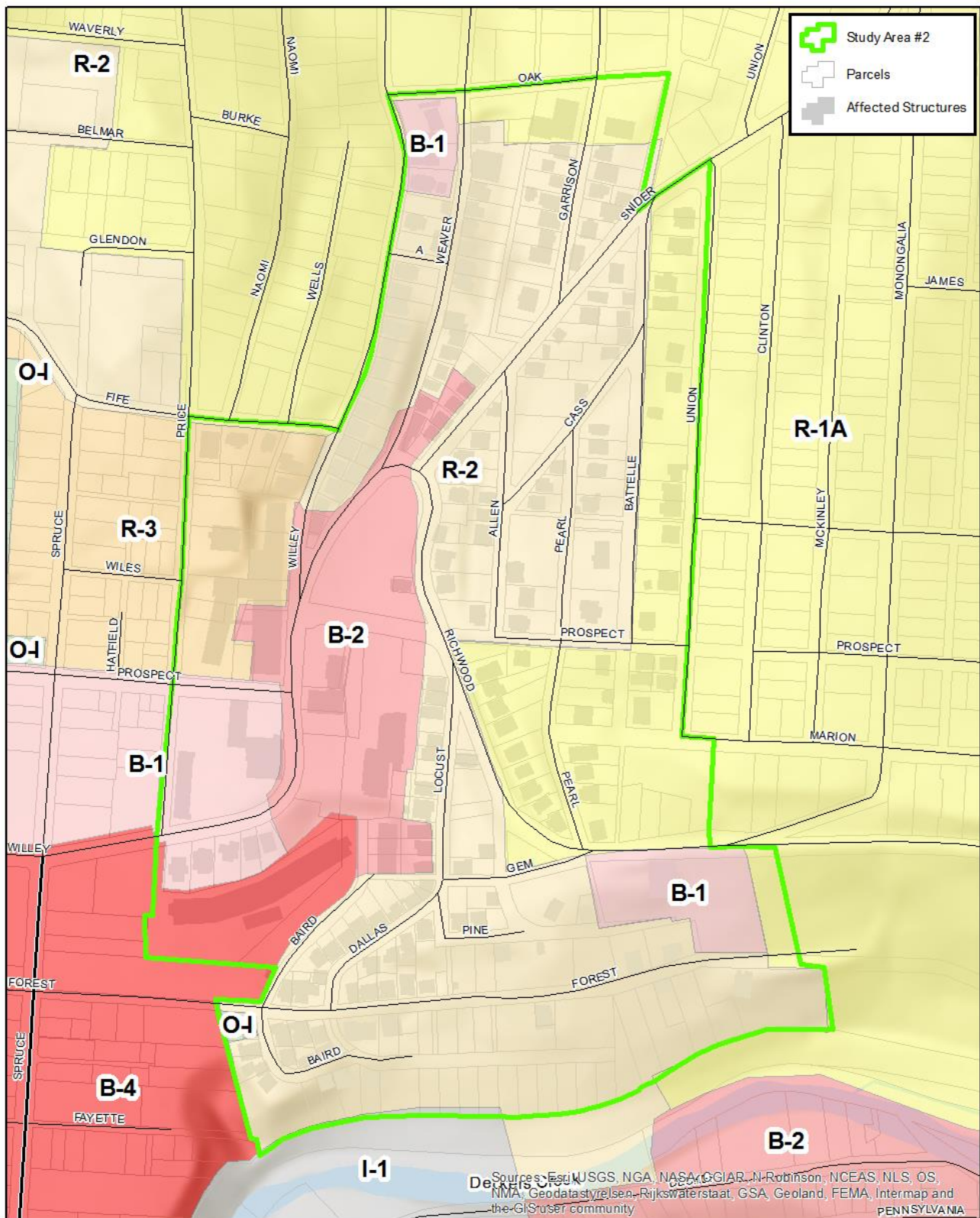
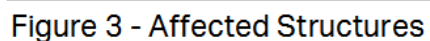


Figure 2 - Existing Zoning Districts





Small Area Plan Future Study Area 2

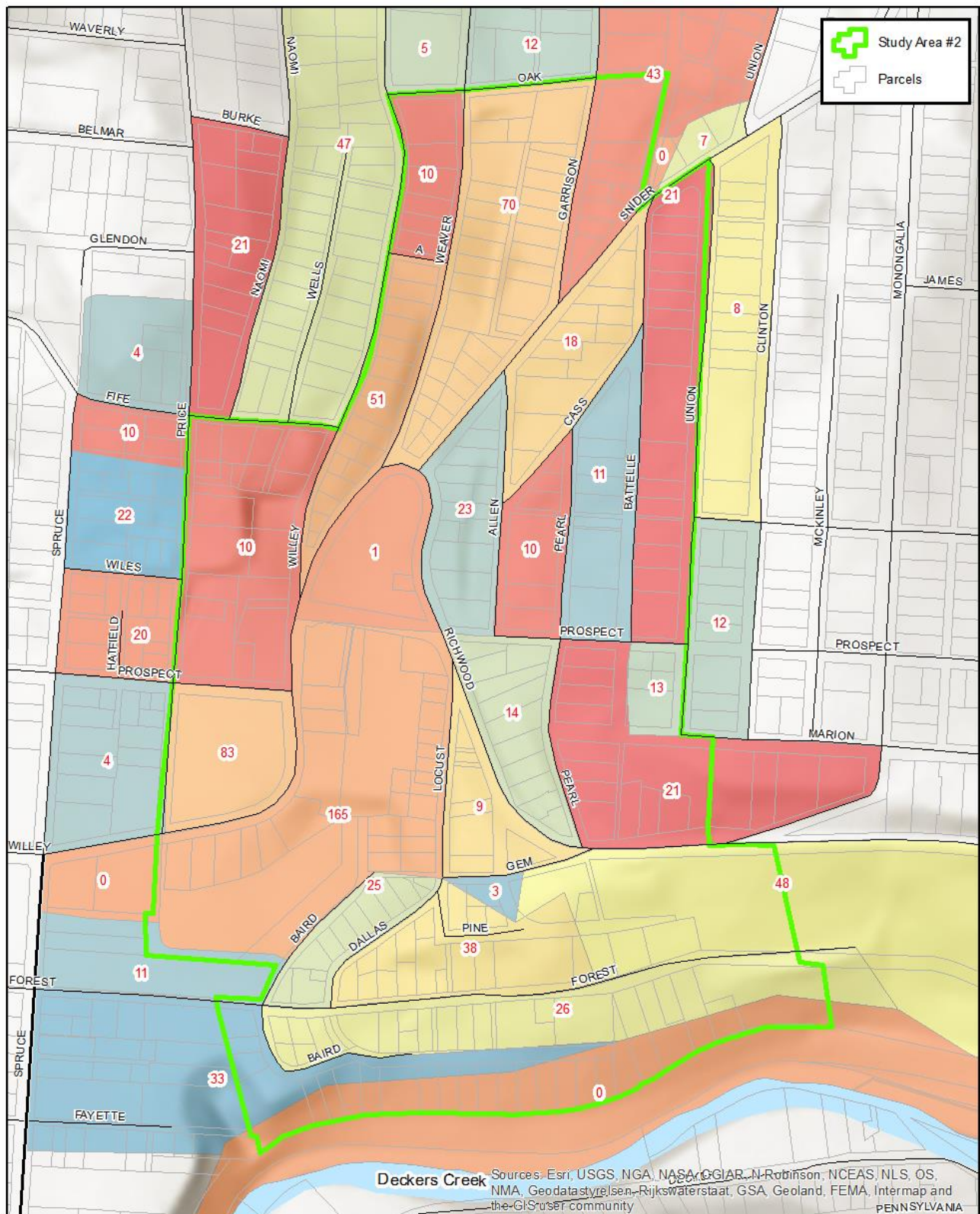


Figure 4 - 2010 Housing Units by Census Block



Small Area Plan Future Study Area 2

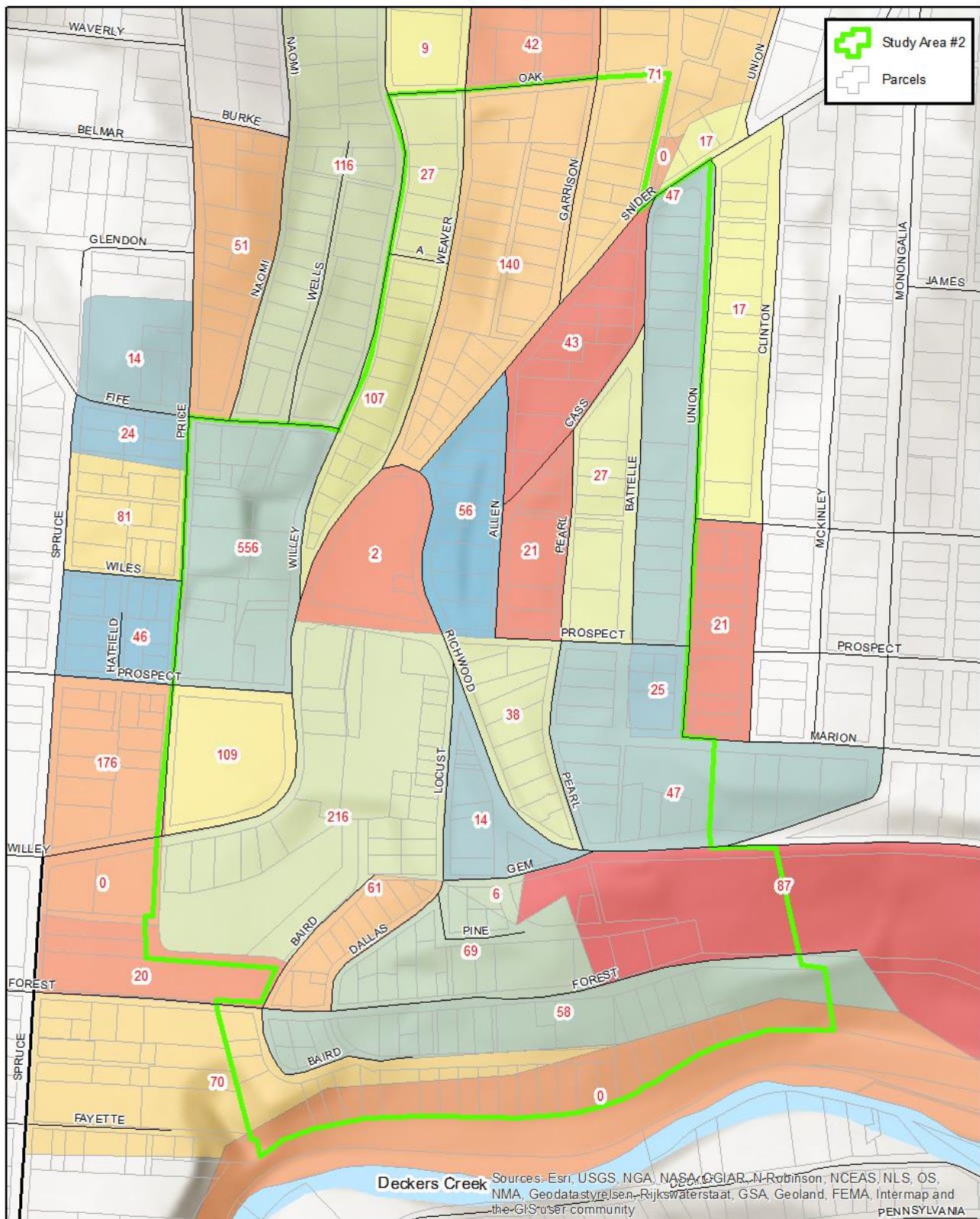
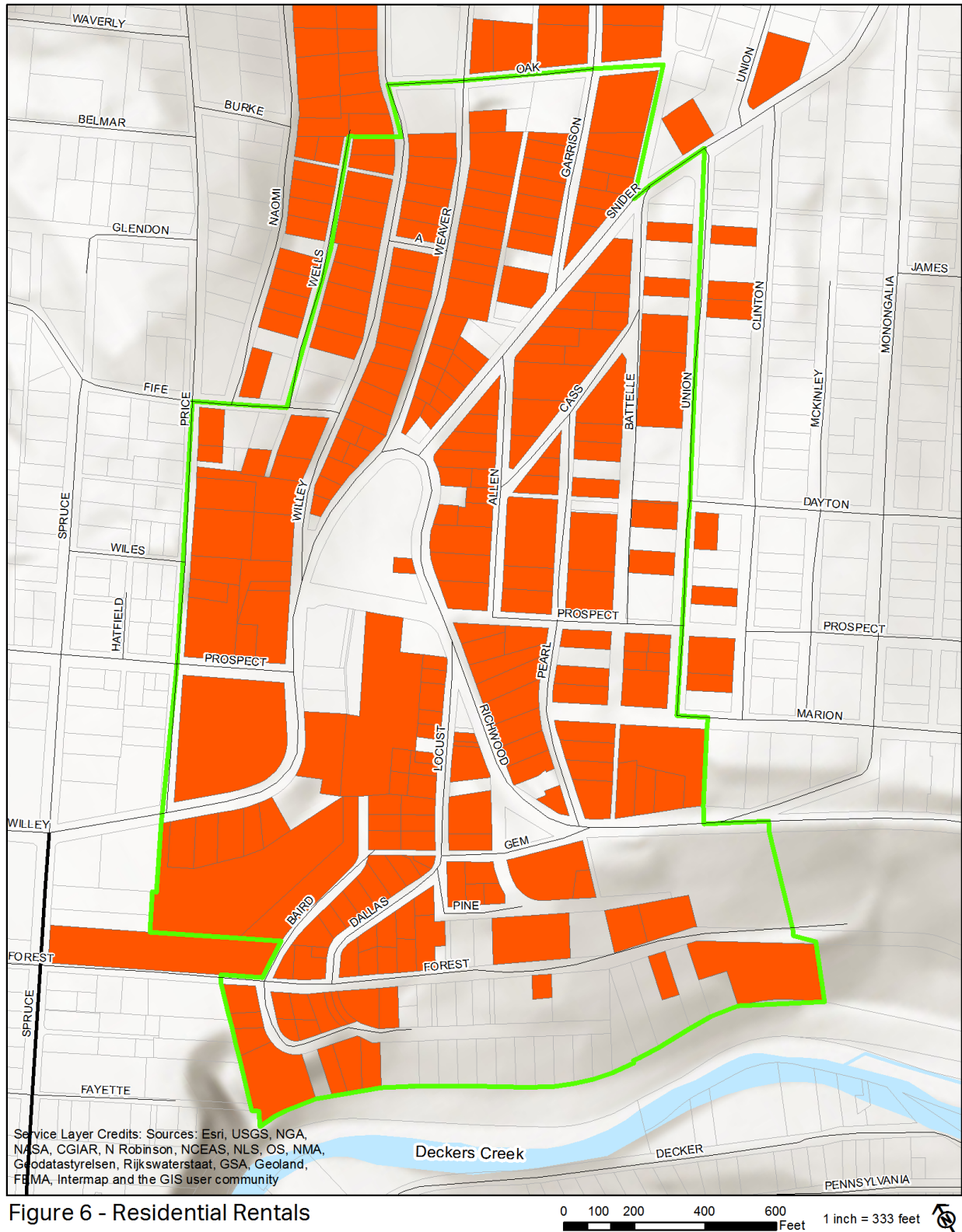


Figure 5 - 2010 Population by Census Block

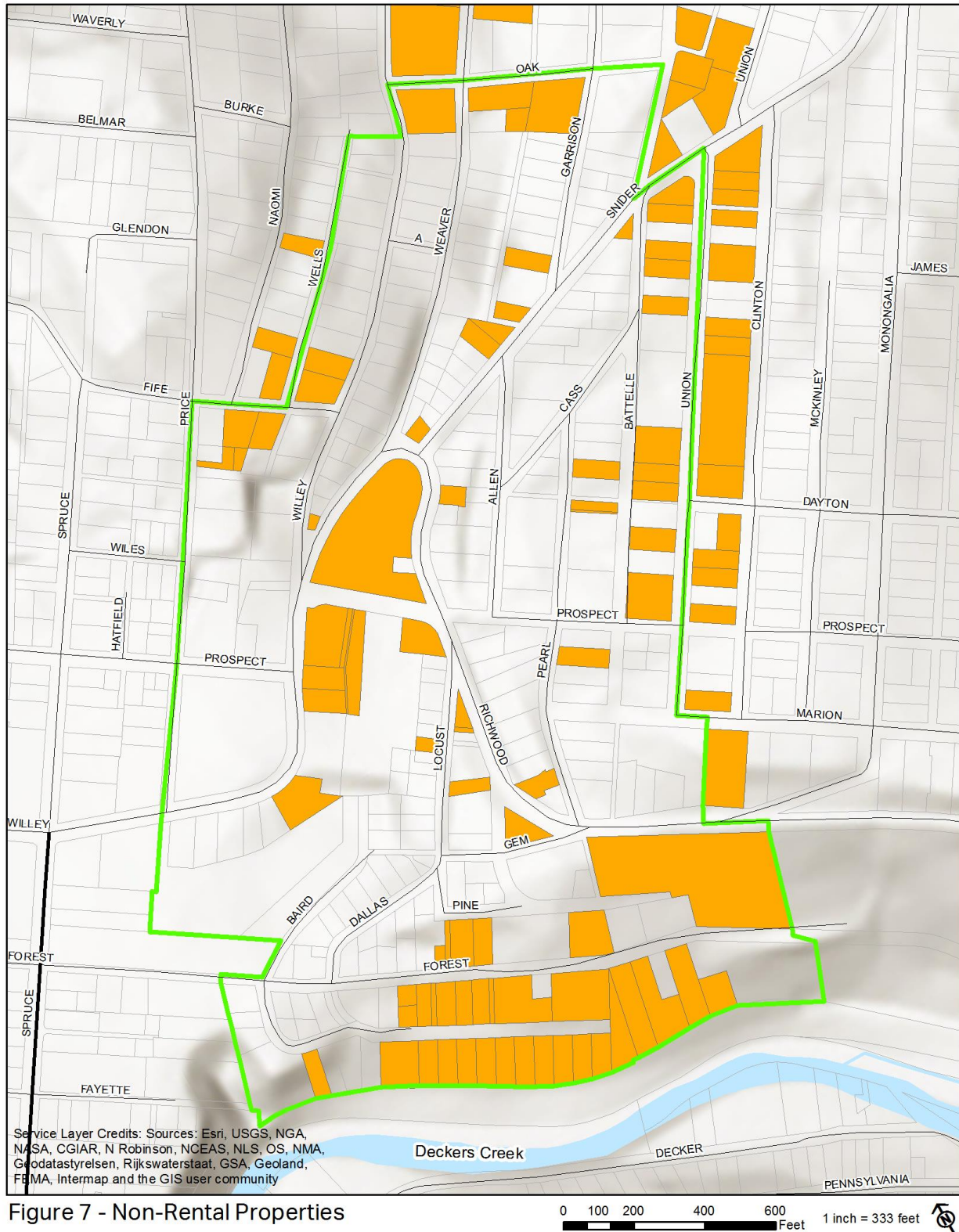


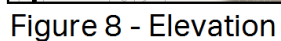
Small Area Plan Future Study Area 2





Small Area Plan Future Study Area 2





Future Study Area 2 – Small Area Study Recommendations Report



Community Preferences

The local community input process was successful in efforts to solicit feedback from a variety of residents and business owners as well as the development community. While not all opinions were in total agreement, consensus was reached on many aspects of the desired future of the study area. Local input from property owners and interested neighbors ranged from history of the neighborhood and changes in land use patterns to feedback on original and future development intentions.

Efforts soliciting public awareness of and participation at the first three (3) community forums included public announcements, the City's website, Channel 15, social media, news media, and postcards sent to study area property owners and owners within approximately 500 feet of the study area (300 mailings for each event).

Through a series of four (4) community meetings and a hearing before the Planning Commission, participating residents supported a change to the recommended zoning classifications shown in **Figure 10**. The following summarizes community preference input collected during the forums.

Community Forum No. 1 | April 27, 2017 7 p.m. | Spruce Street United Methodist

Twenty-five (25) attendees were included on the sign-in sheet at the first public community forum. Participants shared concerns with how the study area has transformed over the last several decades where single-family structures have converted to multi-family occupancies. There was general consensus that many of the study area structures are functionally obsolete and that a new vision for appropriate redevelopment is needed. Participants were cautious in exploring future development patterns toward more intense residential and mixed-use development patterns. However, there was recognition of the proximity to the downtown and WVU's main campus and of the overall need for higher quality and increased housing density.

There was an interest in assessing development pattern alternatives that improve transportation safety, walkability, parking, stormwater runoff, and sewer infrastructure. General concerns were shared regarding the need to improve street lighting, retaining walls, and sidewalks (connectivity as well as condition).

There were requests to add amenities such as a grocery store and parks / green space to help attract new growth and interest in the neighborhood. Many landowners were interested in updating the zoning to match existing development, especially for student rental units in multi-family arrangements. Landowners noted that there are disincentives to replace existing housing stock due to restrictions on new construction in the same location.



Community Forum No. 2 | June 29, 2017 **7 p.m. | Public Safety Building**

The second public community forum included nine (9) participants (sign-in sheet). The forum focused primarily on sharing updates based on questions and issues raised by those in attendance at the first forum. Research into planned infrastructure improvements revealed that no significant City, Morgantown Utility Board (MUB), or WVDOH improvements within the study area are planned or programmed for the immediate future. Potential roadway improvements were discussed, including an alternative Fife Street connection to Willey Street from Richwood Avenue and a safer T-intersection to Richwood Avenue from Dallas Street by eliminating the Gem Street and Locust Avenue intersections.

Attendees asked other questions related to future plans and existing issues. Conversation continued regarding a strong interest to reclassify much of the R-2 properties within the study area to R-3 zoning to encourage redevelopment and densification. There were questions regarding incentives for development, encouraging Planned Unit Development (PUD) opportunities, and how to require developers to improve access when redeveloping property. There was universal agreement that best complete streets practices need to be addressed as property is redeveloped.

Community Forum No. 3 | October 23, 2017 **7 p.m. | Public Safety Building**

The third public community forum included twelve (12) participants (sign-in sheet). This forum focused mainly on preferences for R-2 vs R-3 zoning. Much of the discussion was regarding the R-2 District on the eastern edge of the neighborhood (roughly between Allen Avenue and Battelle Avenue) and a desire to change it to R-3 due to property owner preferences, future density goals, and elevation. Attendees discussed that elevation differences between Allen Avenue and the Woodburn neighborhood should allow for more density and higher building heights without compromising the integrity of the adjoining single-family neighborhood.

Questions were raised on the previously discussed new connector from Richwood Avenue to Fife Avenue and the feasibility in terms of grade differential. The conversation turned to consider moving this connection to include the existing turning movement but expand the intersection to allow for right turns onto Willey Street through the corner properties.

Multiple people stressed the importance of street lights and connected sidewalks and having safety be a priority in the neighborhood, especially as new growth is encouraged.

Woodburn Neighborhood Forum No. 3 | November 29, 2017 **7 p.m. | Crosley's Banquet Center**

Residents of the Woodburn neighborhood organized a meeting with the study team, which included thirteen (13) participants (sign-in sheet). The purpose of the meeting was to solicit feedback from Woodburn residents on the nature of potential redevelopment due to the



neighborhood's proximity to the study area. Specific concerns were discussed including increased building height and densities permitted if the R-3 District were permitted to extend based Battelle Avenue toward Union Avenue.

Meeting attendees were supportive of higher density development radiating outward from the downtown district and voiced similar hopes for Area 2 that were heard in earlier meetings. There was some concern for the maximum height allowable along those streets immediately adjacent to Woodburn (Battelle Avenue and Union Avenue). Questions arose regarding potential additional limits that could be placed on those areas to lower default maximum building heights.

Stakeholder Meetings | 2017 | Various Locations

AECOM met with owners of some of the larger property holdings within the study area at various times throughout the project for the purpose of discussing their individual interests and plans for their property over the next ten (10) years.

On March 14, 2017, a one-on-one interview was conducted with James Giuliani regarding his property within study area. The discussion was fruitful and revealed an interest in continuing the growth of the neighborhood into higher density residential development. In addition, there were concepts discussed regarding desired growth related to student services and parking for WVU due to the proximity of the downtown campus to the study area. In addition to the in-person meeting, AECOM had follow-up discussions with Mr. Giuliani on multiple occasions regarding ongoing plans for his property and other input on the planning process.

On June 19, 2017, a stakeholder meeting was held with Doug Shepherd, Matt Ray, and Brendan Wiley regarding their business' plans for property owned within the study area. The overwhelming desire was for the area around Forest Avenue to be rezoned to R-3 to match existing occupancy and clean up the permitting process for multi-family dwelling units. There was discussion of creating a PUD in the Locust Avenue area by combining parcels into a larger grouping. It was also noted that larger commercial and retail development would be hindered by existing capacity issues with water/sewer infrastructure and transportation.

Planning Commission Public Hearing | February 8, 2008 6:30 p.m. | City Council Chambers

Christopher Fletcher, AICP, Director of Development Services reported that the small area planning project had been completed and advised the Planning Commission of procedural steps to accept the report. Chet Parsons, AICP CTP of AECOM provided a Prezi presentation summarizing project activities, the final draft document and recommendations, and addressed questions. Mr. Giuliani was the only person to comment during the public hearing, offering his support and appreciation. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to:

1. Accept, as submitted, the Small Area Plan and Recommendations Report for Future Study Area 2 – Willey | Snider | Richwood dated 08 FEB 2018, with the understanding



additional narrative will be included beginning on Page 18 of 34 summarizing Commission and public comments and Commission action.

2. File said Area 2 Report as an appendage to and product of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, affirming the Report advances implementation of Comp Plan Strategies NH 1.2 and ED 5.7.
3. Direct Staff to proceed with drafting zoning map and text amendments as generally outlined in the Area 2 Report for future consideration by the Planning Commission.

The analysis and recommendations contained in the following pages effectively considers landowner preferences and balances public opinion with sound planning practice and overall community and economic development objectives enumerated in the *2013 Comp Plan*.

Development Context

The study area includes seven (7) different zoning districts ranging from single-family residential to the downtown general business. The mix of residential and commercial zoning within such a small area does not appear to adequately represent existing land use or development patterns or the shifting trend toward desired higher densities and mixed uses within and at the edge of the urban center. The distinctions among these zoning districts impact potential opportunities of renewal.

Residential Zoning Districts

When comparing the City's residential zoning classifications, each district supports a very different structure of density and permitted development pattern. For example, the R-1A District is expected to have a much lower housing density (dwelling units per acre) than the R-2 District, since an R-1A District should primarily encompass detached, single-family dwellings. The maximum residential density pattern permitted within the R-1A District, based on one (1) single-family dwelling per every 3,500-square foot parcel, is 12.4 dwelling units per acre.

The R-2 District permits single-family, two-family, and townhouse dwelling units by-right and multi-family dwelling units with conditional use approval, which affords the Board of Zoning Appeals the opportunity to consider multi-family development on a case-by-case basis and within the context of a specific site and its surrounding building and natural environment. Although the R-2 District permits a broader spectrum of permitted housing types, maximum building envelope requirements restrict density and intensity as a bridge between the R-1A and R-3 Districts. Unfortunately, there are too many potential design variables, given current building envelope standards, to establish what the maximum residential density pattern might be within the R-2 District.

The R-3 District is expected to provide the highest residential densities per acre. All dwelling unit types are permitted by-right and are permitted to be developed with more liberal building envelope requirements. The only R-3 District within the study is located between Willey Street,



Fife Avenue, Price Street, and Prospect Street, which is primarily consumed by WVU's Arnold Hall. Additionally, there are multiple structures throughout the study area classified as multi-family dwellings. Like the R-2 District, the maximum residential density pattern within the R-3 District cannot be measured given current standards and potential design variables. However, more liberal maximum building height standards in the R-3 District and vertically stacked dwelling units results in a higher residential density than the R-1A and R-2 District.

A full comparison of each residential district concerning the allowed uses, building and lot sizes for the R-1A, R-2 and R-3 Districts can be viewed in Appendix B, but **Table 3** provides an abridged comparison of the building envelope standards for these districts. The following table is intended to provide a simple comparative illustration as these standards are, under certain circumstances, superseded (more or less restrictive) by other provisions of the City's Planning and Zoning Code.

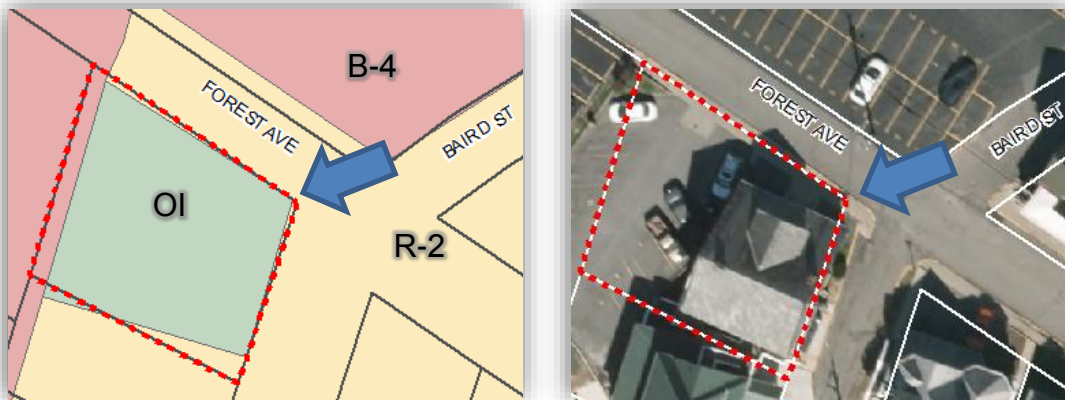
Table 3: Residential District Building Envelopes

Building Envelope Standard	R-1A	R-2	R-3
Min. Lot Size	3,500 sq. ft.	5,000 sq. ft.	4,000 sq. ft.
Min. Lot Frontage	30 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
Max. Lot Coverage	50%	50%	60%
Min. Front Setback	8 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.
Max. Front Setback	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.
Min. Side Setback	5 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.
Min. Rear Setback	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.
Max. Building Height	2.5 stories or 35 ft.	2.5 stories or 35 ft.	4 stories or 55 ft. (80 ft. w/ CU approval)

Business Zoning Districts

The four (4) business districts within the study allow very different commercial uses and development patterns. The spectrum begins at the B-1 District intended to be oriented toward pedestrian-scaled development patterns with uses meeting the daily shopping and service needs of the immediate residential neighborhood to the B-2 District intended for large space users along major thoroughfares to the B-4 District intended to serve as the City's central business district with maximum building height allowances of 120 feet.

Additionally, there is a single parcel at the corner of Baird Street and Forest Avenue with a zoning classification of OI. Although the OI zoning classification is intended to provide areas for office and institutional type development patterns and uses, the subject site contains what was a single-family dwelling constructed in 1911, according to the Monongalia County Assessor's online data, and has since been converted into a multi-family dwelling structure. The parcel is very small considering the minimum OI building envelope standards. Specifically, constructing a new building on the subject site to be occupied by OI permitted land uses could not be completed without significant setback variance relief.



With the exception of the OI District, a full comparison of each business district currently included in the study area is provided in Appendix C in terms of lot size requirements, building envelope standards, permitted uses.

Planned Infrastructure Improvements

Infrastructure improvement planning and coordination will be critical to ensure redevelopment opportunities are realized within the study area. Areas of notable consideration include:

- Assessing whether certain open and unopened rights-of-way within the study area could be annulled and/or realigned making way for larger tracts of developable land. This assessment must consider best practices in access management, connectivity of multimodal travel ways, below ground utilities, stormwater management, solid waste storage and collection, and open space planning. Best complete streets design practices should guide planned improvements; however, segregated facilities may be necessary given topographic changes and the current alignment of rights-of-way entering/exiting the study area.
- Based on conversations with Morgantown Utility Board (MUB) officials, it appears that water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems may be at capacity within the study area. Increases in development density and intensity are anticipated to require significant system upgrades.
- Public amenities including sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and open space were themes repeated during community forums. Care in planning and developing such public infrastructure amenities will certainly serve to advance desired place making, market interest/absorption, and quality of life.



Transportation Planning

As part of the Morgantown-Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MMMPO) Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), formerly referred to as the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), there is one long-term project that may impact the study area. Project 25 as shown in **Figure 9** is listed as a Tier 4 priority, which indicates this project has the lowest priority of funding.

Project 25 is intended to provide improved capacity and pedestrian and bike facilities along Willey Street. These improvements include:

- Add capacity through key turn lane additions and intersection improvements
- Add key connections to complete the sidewalks
- Widen lanes to 15 feet on inclines for adequate bicycle overtaking width
- Improve geometry (sight distance, curvature, lane widths, shoulders, etc.)
- Provide bus stops and shelters at key locations.



Figure 9: MMMPO Project 25

City Administration requested MMMPO staff to conduct an operational study of the intersection of Richwood Avenue and Willey Street. Although the study's scope of work is currently being developed, the project has been included in the MMMPO's FY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Project initiation is anticipated in the first quarter of FY 2018 once WVU students have returned for the Fall Semester so vehicular movements and pedestrian counts can be captured while school is in session.

The purpose of this operational study will be to determine the impact of correcting the intersection's unsafe skew on traffic operation in the area and to determine the impact of any correction on the larger transportation network including pedestrians, Mountain Line Transit, and Monongalia County Schools.

Development Recommendations

Based upon best practices, professional planning experience, and feedback from stakeholders and neighborhood residents, the following recommendations are made for Area 2 and future development scenarios.

Land Use

Area 2 is anticipated to be a growth area in the City of Morgantown. The study area's proximity to Downtown Morgantown and WVU's main campus and the age and condition of existing



housing stock make it a unique location for renewal through focused redevelopment at appropriately tempered densities and intensities.

Regional population growth and the demand for more diverse and inclusive housing, from student rentals to young professionals, should make this an attractive location to live. In that regard, future development necessitates a more urban form that includes higher residential densities than currently exists. However, place-making design strategies that incorporate open spaces and mixed residential and nonresidential development patterns, particularly along Willey Street and Richwood Avenue, will be critical to maximize redevelopment opportunities.

Great care will be necessary in planning the study area as an integrated whole rather than haphazardly viewing parcels or groups of parcels independently. Property assemblage and parcel consolidation should yield more attractive development sites. The scale of redevelopment must also respect a transition toward the adjoining Woodburn Neighborhood. Extraordinary attention toward site design, densities, uses, and access should be guided by protecting the single-family development pattern and related quality of life in Woodburn.

Zoning

The zoning of Area 2 should be consistent with the consensus of the community and with the direction established in the *2013 Comp Plan*:

- Permit higher density residential patterns
- Permit mixed uses
- Incentives to assemble and consolidate parcels for redevelopment
- Design standards that are appropriate to the location and scale of the corridor
- Transition to lower density residential in the adjoining the Woodburn Neighborhood
- Infrastructure improvements supporting higher densities including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, street lighting, and open space

The feedback received from stakeholder meetings identified a positive focus on higher density and scale of development in this area. The R-3 District has been identified, through discussion during the four (4) community forums and focused stakeholder interviews, as an integral part of the future zoning classification in this area.

As shown in **Figure 10**, the recommended zoning scenario for future growth and development includes R-3 zoning from Deckers Creek north to Oak Street and from Willey Street and Richwood Avenue east to Battelle Street. An expansion of the R-3 District is also recommended from Prospect Street south to the B-4 District. The R-3 District will allow for a broader mix of housing types and higher residential densities given more liberal building height allowances.

Approximately 12 parcels along the western side of Willey Street beginning at Fife Avenue and extending north are recommended for reclassification from R-1A to R-2. This zoning map



amendment will better reflect existing uses and should promote market interest in redevelopment at a transitional scale between Willey Street and the R-1A area to the west.

Willey Street is envisioned to have increased commercial, retail, and mixed-use growth, with similar but less intense development along Richwood Avenue south and east of Pearl Street and Allen Street up to Snider Street.

Battelle Avenue's existing eastern zoning classification is recommended for the area between Woodburn's R-1A District and the remaining study area. This should serve as an acceptable transition point between the higher density study area and the lower density, single-family development pattern that dominates the Woodburn neighborhood.

The B-2 District along Willey Street and Richwood Avenue should grow into a mixed-use, mid-rise (generally 5 to 8 stories) commercial node providing larger commercial tenant spaces at the ground level below apartments serving a mix of targeted tenancies (rental and condominium) and supported by structured parking facilities. Structured parking facilities should be below grade and/or wrapped by commercial and/or residential uses along principal façades.

The B-1 Districts on Richwood Avenue and at the very north edge of the study area at the corner of Willey Street and Oak Street should grow into pedestrian-scaled, urban neighborhood uses with a focus on development of neighborhood shopping and service tenant spaces meeting the needs of the immediate neighborhood.

An Overlay District is a regulatory zoning tool that creates a special zoning district, placed over an existing base zoning district(s), which identifies special provisions in addition to those in the underlying base zoning district(s). An overlay district can share common boundaries with a base zoning district or cut across base zoning district boundaries. Article 1329.02 of the City's Planning and Zoning Code defines the term "Overlay District" as:

OVERLAY DISTRICT – An area where certain additional requirements are superimposed upon a base zoning district or underlying zoning district and where the requirements of the base or underlay district may or may not be altered. Where the standards of the overlay and base or underlying zoning district are different, the more restrictive standards shall apply.

The City of Morgantown currently utilizes the overlay district tool, including the:

- ISOD, Interstate Sign Overlay District
- Airport Overlay District
- Sunnyside Overlay Districts (3)
- B-4NPOD, B-4 Neighborhood Preservation Overlay District.

Given the confluence of existing and desired land uses, densities, and development patterns within the 52-acre area, the overlay district tool is strongly recommended for a large portion of



the study area. Further, the reclassification of base zoning districts should not be undertaken unless accompanied with an overlay district. **Figure 10** illustrates the geometry of the recommended overlay district in crosshatch.

The augmented land use and land development provisions enumerated within the overlay district should advance best place making design practices by ensuring compatibility, harmony, and continuity in redevelopment planning and regulation. The task of composing specific overlay district provisions is outside the scope of this planning study project. Regulations established by the overlay should be guided by increasing design flexibility, customizing permitted uses, rewarding site assembly, discouraging continued obsolescence, and protecting the adjoining Woodburn Neighborhood, which will most likely not otherwise be achieved through the base zoning districts. The task of developing specific overlay district provisions will require careful and deliberate efforts of City staff and the Planning Commission.

The following is a general list of overlay district strategies that should be explored to advance desired renewal within the study area. This list is not intended to serve as a complete and accurate set of contemplated provisions nor is it suggested that all noted regulatory strategies are necessary to meet desired outcomes.

- **Encouraging Site Assembly and Discouraging Continued Obsolescence**
 - Graduated density strategies that allows higher density on larger sites (consolidated parcels) to encourage voluntary land assembly for urban redevelopment
 - Lowering minimum PUD acreage requirement similar to that afforded within the Sunnyside Neighborhood [Section 1357.02(A)]
 - Reconfiguration and/or annulment of certain rights-of-way to support land assembly
 - Enhancing and integrating multi-purpose utilization of rights-of-way (complete streets)
 - Require enhanced and integrated pedestrian ways and bicycle paths (sidewalks, paths, lanes, etc.)
- **Density**
 - Minimum and/or maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) standards addressing form and massing of buildings
 - Minimum and/or maximum residential density (e.g., Lot Area per Dwelling Unit, Dwelling Units per Acre, Persons per Square Foot, etc.)
 - Establishing low maximum density standards but incentivizing the delivery of desired use and/or housing type mix through density bonus provisions



- **Building Envelope**
 - Minimum and/or maximum building height¹
 - Minimum and/or maximum front, side, and rear setback provisions
 - Build-to line identification, building siting
 - Lot coverage provisions
- **Land Uses**
 - Customizing permitted land uses (by-right and conditional uses) that might best serve redevelopment potential while ensuring compatibility
 - Requiring/encouraging mixed-use development patterns
 - Encouraging higher density and/or discouraging lower density
 - Requiring/encouraging functional private and public open spaces
- **Parking**
 - Reduced minimum parking requirements similar to those allowances within the B-4 District and/or Sunnyside Overlay Districts
 - Relaxing existing off-site parking provisions to advance the development of consolidated structured parking
- **Architectural Design.** Minimum design standards could be included to promote consistent and complementary building form thereby creating a sense of place and uniqueness. Examples might include:
 - Street level activation
 - Placement and programming of uses
 - Building configuration, form, massing location, articulation, proportionality
 - Fenestration/transparency location and percentage
 - Cladding materials, roofline styles, signage

Housing

A mix of new single-, two-, and multi-family structures within the study area is desired to also include a more diversified resident blend of students and young professionals. Future

¹ When considering maximum building height standards within the overlay district, care should be taken to understand elevation changes between areas of desired higher densities/intensities (Willey/Richwood) and areas of desired lower densities/intensities (Woodburn Neighborhood). Consideration of compatibility, transition, and protecting viewsheds could be achieved by establishing a maximum building height standard based on an acceptable topographic elevation coordinate, the strategy for which the City currently utilizes in the B-4NPOD, B-4 Neighborhood Preservation Overlay District [see Section 1362.04(A)].



development will incorporate additional multi-family structures, with higher residential densities expected in the long-term. Stakeholder meetings indicated a preference for single-family structures oriented to existing R-1A District standards and increasing heights for higher densities oriented to existing R-2 and R-3 District parameters.

New development within the general area between Pearl Street and Union Street (**Figure 11**) was identified as an area of potential concern. Additional measures within overlay districts provisions should preserve viewsheds from the Woodburn Neighborhood to the surrounding area and ensure compatible development intensity transitions. The maximum building height in this general area could be determined by the difference between maximum building height and height of existing adjacent structures in the Woodburn Neighborhood.

Stakeholder meetings identified community preferred zoning district changes from R-2 to R-3, and are identified in **Figure 12** and **Figure 13**. **Figure 12** provides a view looking north from Deckers Creek display how an R-2 arrangement might appear if built-out in the neighborhood. **Figure 13** displays how an R-3 arrangement might appear if built-out in the neighborhood. These figures are general in nature and simply focus on building height and not building form or massing. Precise lot sizes and locations would be clarified during the development review process.

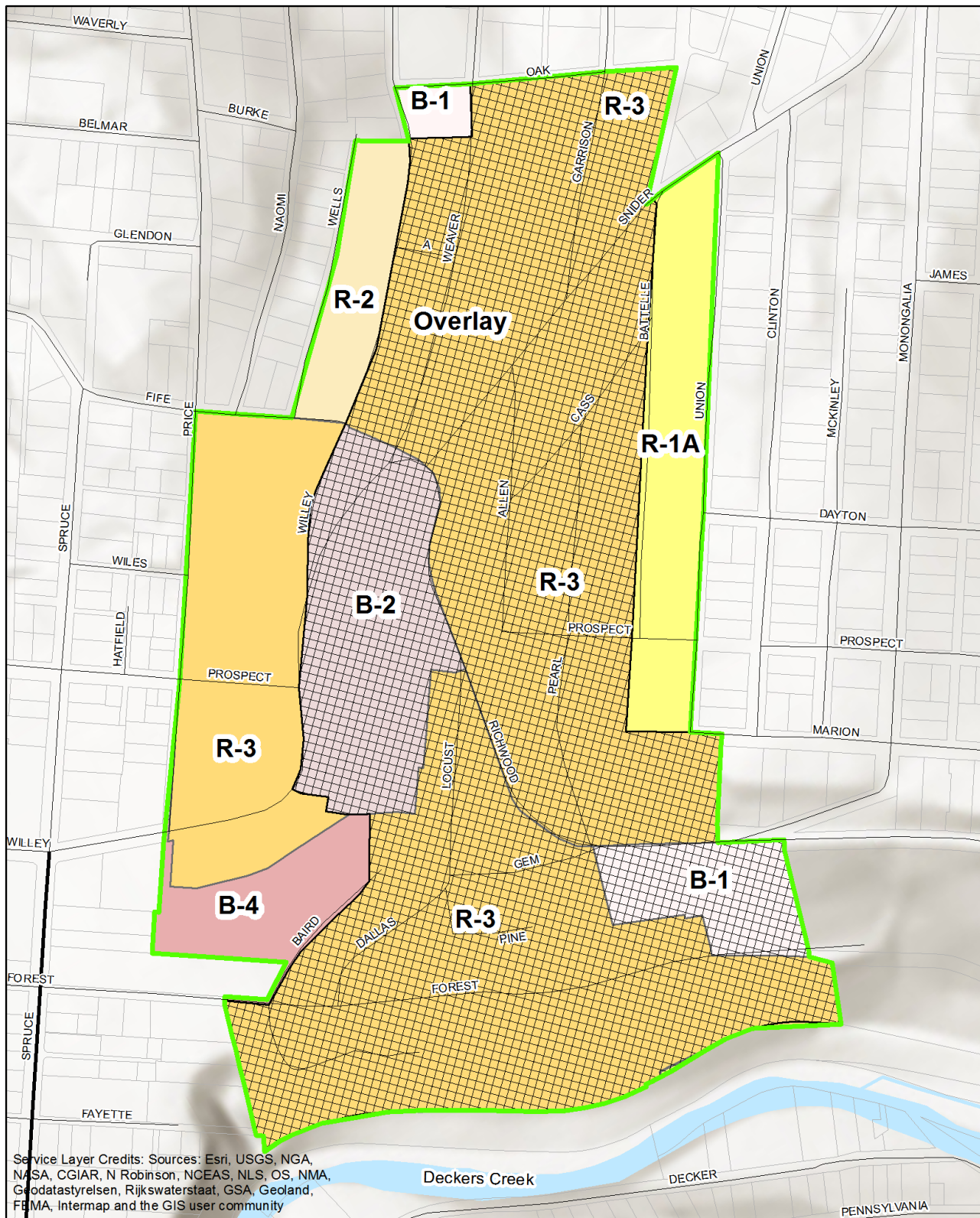


Figure 10 - Recommended Zoning Classifications

0 100 200 400 600 Feet 1 inch = 333 feet

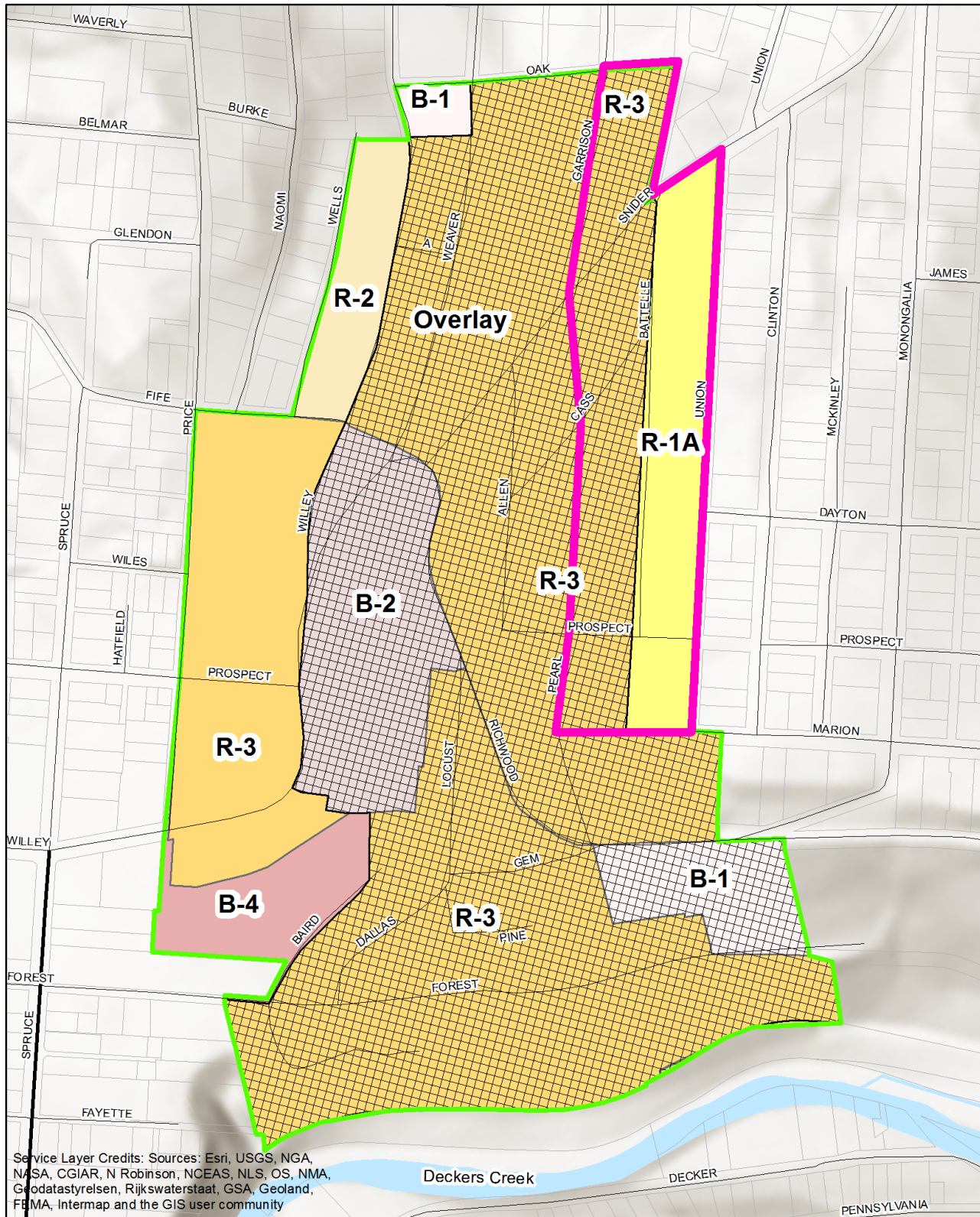


Figure 11 - Overlay Height Coordination

0 100 200 400 600 Feet 1 inch = 333 feet



Figure 12: R-2 Rendering



Figure 13: R-3 Rendering



Transportation

With the existing sidewalk infrastructure and elevation difference between the main transportation corridors and some of the residential areas, access to Mountain Line transit services can be challenging. While significant upgrades to sidewalks, lighting and pedestrian ways are not currently planned, future investment in these facilities may provide residents with more mobility options, including enhanced access to transit. Sidewalks would be constructed by developers under the direction of the City of Morgantown to serve new growth and to provide connections to adjacent neighborhoods and adjoining transportation network.

As transportation decisions are considered for this area and the surrounding street network, traffic speeds along Richwood Avenue and Willey Street should be studied. The future of this area as a viable dense residential neighborhood depends on safe and effective multi-modal transportation opportunities. In addition, the neighborhood's quality of life for homeowners would be preserved by allowing on-street parking in as many applications as possible. Traffic calming measures should be considered as a part of development decisions to ensure residential growth does not outpace transportation infrastructure.

Additional transportation improvements should be considered in the locations highlighted in **Figure 14**. A functional "T" intersection should be developed at the intersection of Richwood Avenue and Willey Street or the relocation of the connection between Richwood Avenue and Willey Street at the unimproved East Prospect Street location. The existing intersection is unsafe for pedestrians and does not allow full traffic movement in both directions. As noted earlier in this report, City Administration is working with MMMPO Staff to conduct an operation study of this connection to be included in the MMMPO's FY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Long-term plans should be developed for Dallas Street to continue up hill to Richwood Avenue and provide a safer method for vehicles to travel from Forest Avenue to Richwood Avenue. An alternate alignment could potentially advance annulling Locust Street and Gem Street thereby creating larger flanking assembled development sites. This alternate corridor should be designed for lower speeds and with traffic calming to create disincentives to becoming a cut-through route. It should be noted there appears to be substantial elevation changes along the contemplated alignment, which may lead to a cost prohibitive determination based on an examination between function/utility and cost.

An improved pedestrian pathway connecting Willey Street to Richwood Avenue through the unimproved East Prospect Street should be developed in existing right-of-way to facilitate safe, efficient bicycle and pedestrian movement from upper neighborhood housing to the downtown and WVU's main campus. This pathway should have amenities such as pedestrian-scaled lighting, street furniture, and greenscaping such as trees, groundcover, and attractive plantings to add to the aesthetic experience for travelers. Pedestrian improvements including improved vehicular access management is recommended in the near term.

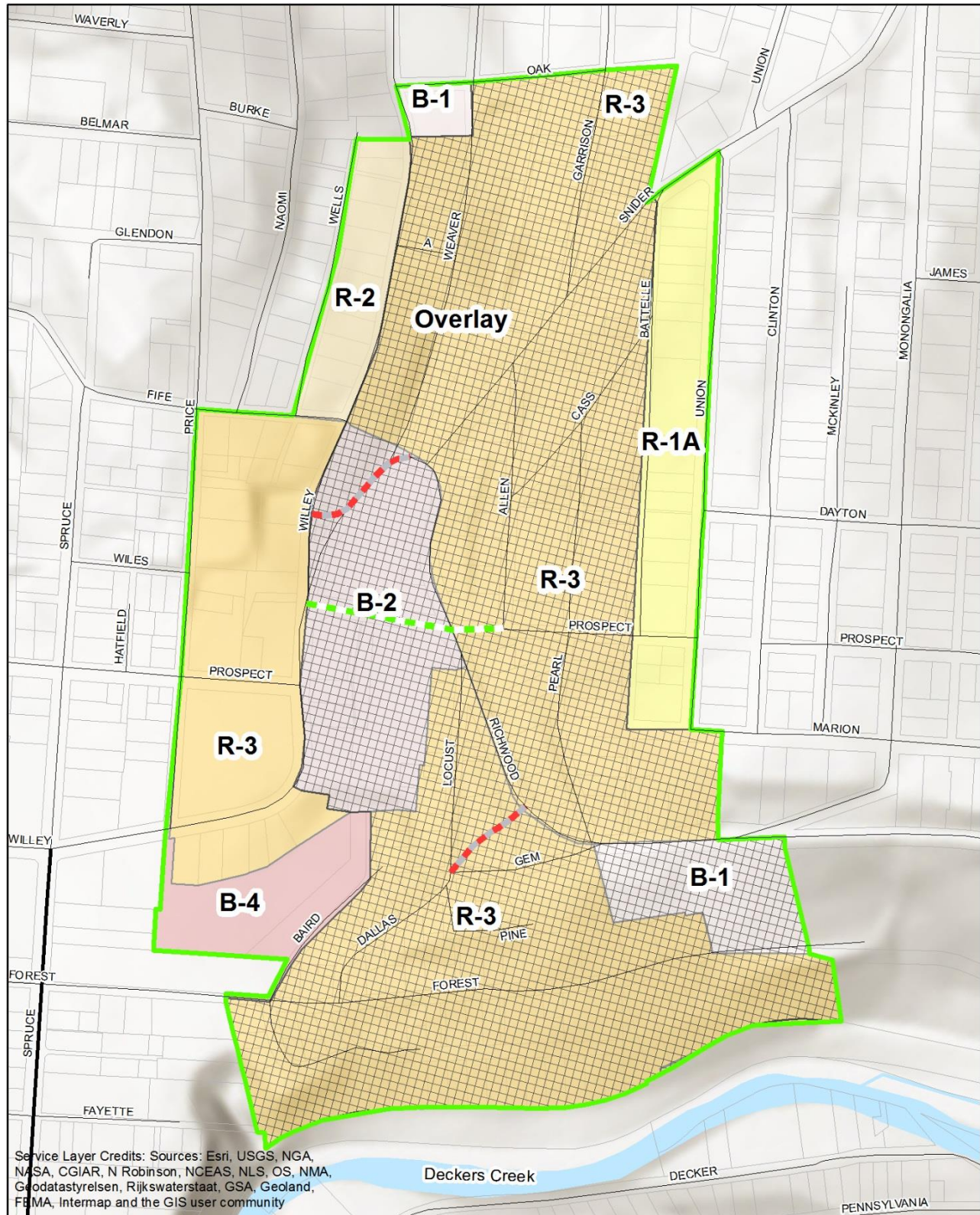


Figure 11 - Overlay Height Coordination

0 100 200 400 600 Feet 1 inch = 333 feet



Historic Preservation

A review of existing structures within the study area does not indicate the presence of any historic properties or sites that would warrant any special consideration during neighborhood planning. As development occurs, more careful study may be warranted during site review and permitting.

Environment

Stakeholders identified steep slopes as a development concern, with the currently undeveloped properties in the neighborhood, especially in relation to the physical location of Deckers Creek. It is anticipated that development costs will be higher for areas closer to Decker's Creek as a result of natural topographic and hillside stabilization.

The larger parcels of undeveloped land within the study area have steep slopes, as noted in **Figure 8**. Residents noted that stormwater runoff from the area around Oak Street flows south and the stormwater infrastructure is inadequate. Residents reported flooding of basements and property. The City of Morgantown and the Morgantown Utility Board (MUB) should work with developers as project plans are assembled, to ensure erosion and sediment control, stormwater management, and other utility concerns are properly addressed, prior to physical construction.

Parks

Due to the smaller size of the study area relative to other neighborhoods in the City, large groupings of parkland within the study area do not appear feasible. Whitmoore Park, located at the southeast edge of the study area, is accessed from below Richwood Avenue and at the end of Forest Avenue. This park is an 8.6-acre facility that includes play equipment and connects the Woodburn Neighborhood and the study area to the Decker's Creek Trail.

Although additional parkland within the study area does not appear practicable, public and private open space planning with new development should be required to advance desired placemaking objectives and quality of life amenities for new residents. As developers work with City staff to implement new projects, pocket parks, streetscaping and green space should be evaluated with proposed development plans.

Neighborhood Services

Neighborhood services are generally those amenities that help the area function safely and efficiently. The need for these types of improvements is typically dictated by population growth, substantial density increases, or major economic development projects. Sometimes referred to as community services, examples of neighborhood services include schools, police substations, fire and emergency medical substations, healthcare, libraries, and childcare facilities. No additional neighborhood service demands are anticipated as a result of the proposed increase in R-3 zoning within the study area.



Economic Development

A variety of neighborhood- and pedestrian-scaled retail, commercial, and service businesses in conjunction with residential development in a mixed-use development pattern is highly desired within portions of the study area, particularly along Willey Street and Richwood Avenue. A mixed-use approach should serve to increase market interest of key tracts and permit developers to diversify risk. Appendix B provides the current list of permitted and conditional use options within the study area's proposed zoning districts. However, the overlay district can and should be used to customize permitted land uses within the study area for the purpose of stabilizing new nonresidential use offerings with increased residential density and diversity in new housing options. Commercial uses that generate higher vehicular trips from locations outside the neighborhood should be avoided.

Implementation

The following table identifies plan implementation strategies along with related categories, capital costs, timeframes, and responsible entities. The information is presented in a manner to generate continued discussion and planning.

Task	Category	Capital Cost	Timeframe	Leadership Entities
Finalize the geometry of an overlay district and prepare overlay zoning regulations	Zoning	TBD	6-12 months	Planning Staff, Planning Commission, City Council
Enact recommended zoning map amendments with overlay district	Zoning	TBD	6-12 months	Planning Staff, Planning Commission, City Council
Complete a transportation operations study	Transportation	TBD	6-12 months	City of Morgantown, MMMPO
Implement East Prospect Street pedestrian improvements	Transportation	TBD	1-2 years	City of Morgantown
Install new and repair existing sidewalks	Transportation	Site-dependent	1-5 years	Developers, City of Morgantown



**Small Area Plan
Future Study Area 2**

Task	Category	Capital Cost	Timeframe	Leadership Entities
Redesign and construct new intersection serving the Richwood Avenue and Willey Street connection	Transportation	TBD	2-6 years	City of Morgantown, WVDOH
System-wide stormwater planning	Environment	TBD	5-10 years	MUB, City of Morgantown, Developers
Water and sanitary sewer upgrades	Environment	TBD	5-10 years	MUB, City of Morgantown, Developers
Develop new collector route from Dallas Street to Richwood Avenue	Transportation	TBD	10-20 years	City of Morgantown, MMMPO